

Another View of That Canadian Turnover

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TORONTO, CANADA

ON OCTOBER 20 there happened in a general election in the province of Ontario the most surprising episode in Canadian political annals. It was not merely that a government, supposed to be invincible, went down to defeat. It was that both the great historic Canadian parties were, as far as Ontario is concerned, almost annihilated and that there rose in their places two new people's parties, Farmers and Labor, unheard of three years ago.

"It's not a revolt but a revolution, sire," exclaimed an adviser of the late lamented Louis XVI of France when His Majesty tried to belittle the significance of the fall of the Bastille.

To many Canadian politicians the fall of Ontario contains as much significance as did the fall of the Bastille. They regard the Farmers' uprising not as a mere peasants' revolt, but as the beginning of a political revolution.

Already the movement has spread far beyond Ontario. By-elections for the Canadian Parliament have resulted, in every constituency the Farmers have contested, in decisive successes. The western prairie provinces are apparently ready, whenever the call comes, to elect practically solid blocks of Farmer candidates, and the heaven is beginning to work in the maritime provinces and even in the French Canadian province of Quebec. "I'll bet a thousand dollars that the next Premier of Canada will be a Farmer," said a supporter of the present Union Government the other evening, and he found no takers.

What happened in the province of Ontario will be retold to the present generation's children's children. Ontario has been regarded as a stronghold of rock-ribbed conservatism, using the word without reference to the political party which bears that name. It has ever been staunchly loyal to the party system. On one occasion twenty-five years ago there was an incipient Independent Farmers' Movement, organized under the name of the "Patrons of Industry" which for a time achieved a measure of success. But when the smoke of the first election battle cleared away it was found that the movement was but an offshoot from one of the parties. It shrivelled and died in a day. Generally speaking, any man who kicked over the party traces in Ontario was committing political suicide. For many years in the legislature of 111 members there had been only one Independent. He was a venerable and highly respected Labor leader, who had won his distinction by a lifetime of effort and struggle. When he died not long ago it was felt another generation might pass before he would have a successor. His shade will rejoice when it sees trooping into the next legislature not one representative of Labor, but no less than 12 apostles, each elected to carry forward the principles of the Independent Labor party and two or three of them, thanks to the party's coalition with Agriculture, already established with cabinet rank in the Seats of the Mighty.

Ontario used to be a Liberal province, never rampantly radical, but Liberal with a tendency to Whiggishness. One Liberal administration lived for 30 years, so hostile was the population to any idea of change. When that administration fell upon corrupt and evil days the province turned to the other "legitimate" political party for relief, and for nearly 15 years the province in political complexion has been overwhelmingly Conservative. The tendency toward Conservatism was being accelerated, so it was thought, by the increasing industrialization of Ontario with the consequent growth of Protectionist convictions. Official Liberalism, even with its mild program of reform, had indeed almost decided to abandon Ontario to its enemies and look for a future to the radical West and to French Canadian Quebec. These circumstances will help to explain what a shock the eruption of October 20 produced on the politicians. It was as if in the days of William J. Bryan the states of New York and Pennsylvania had declared overwhelmingly for free silver.

When the Hearst Government announced that it was going to the country, there was scarcely a ripple of interest among the professional politicians. The result was regarded as a foregone conclusion. For years either in provincial or federal elections the Liberals of Ontario had been unable to elect more than a corporal's guard of representatives. In the legislature just dissolved they had about 30 Oppositionists out of a house of 111. The Hearst Government had a creditable war record. Its administration record was clean and sound. It had made no serious mistakes in matters of policy. The Premier and most of his Cabinet colleagues were highly regarded by the community. It was known that there was a Farmers' movement afoot and that some stir was being made in some of the rural communities, but no one regarded it very seriously. In the first place, it was understood to be devoting its platform framing chiefly to federal affairs, such as the tariff. In provincial matters it seemed to have no particular policy and no grievances that were serious. Furthermore it was practically leaderless. No outstanding public man was associated with it. The names of its officers were recognized only in limited circles and its candidates were all unknown outside of the communities in which they lived. It was admitted that the organization might here and there elect a few members, but that was all. The triumphant return of the government was the general expectation. With its opposition divided between Liberals and Farmers, no one would have been surprised if its authority over the next legislature had been even more pronounced than in the last.

The sequel told a vastly different story. The Farmers' movement developed like the crusaders! The three-cornered fights, instead of killing off Farmers' candidates, killed off the candidates of the two old parties. The Farmers united on their men and Liberals and Conservatives divided the opposition.

"The farmers have gone clean crazy," was the observation of one old line politician as he started to analyze the returns on election night. Early in the

evening Sam Hughes, former Minister of Militia and one of the shrewdest politicians in Canada, called up his home constituency in Lindsay on the long distance telephone from Ottawa. "Has anyone voted around there?" he asked in demanding an explanation of the returns as far as they had been received. "It seems two or three Farmers have voted," was the answer. Sam's constituency has been overwhelmingly Conservative from time immemorial. What Sam said when he found it had been captured by an enemy nearly melted the telephone wire.

Take another example, the constituency of South Grey. It has never been known to elect anything but a Conservative. The sitting member was Dr. Jameson, Speaker of the Legislature. For 20 years he had been elected by majorities in the thousands or, as on the last two occasions, by acclamation. He was a medical practitioner known and loved by nearly every man, woman and child in the riding. Yet he was ignominiously turned out by a Farmers' candidate.

This is the kind of thing that happened all over the province. In the rural constituencies where a Liberal or a Conservative was elected it was generally due to some local defect in the Farmers' hastily thrown-together organization. Meanwhile something equally as disturbing happened in the industrial centers. Hitherto the Independent Labor party has been regarded as a joke. Generally Labor was represented in the election contests only by some crank who perhaps would receive a hundred votes. The newly organized Independent Labor party had recently been showing some activity but it was not regarded as possible that it could make any impression on the ballot boxes. The event showed that outside of Ottawa and Toronto, where for special reasons the old parties are more firmly entrenched than anywhere, the Independent Labor party swept every industrial center of the province. In Sault Ste. Marie, the Prime Minister's constituency, the chairman of the Local Trades and Labor Council snowed under the leader of the government. In London, Sir Adam Beck, head of the great Hydro-Electric Provincial enterprises, was turned out by a Labor man. The great industrial center of Hamilton elected a broom-maker and a plumber by majorities unprecedented in local history. The same story came from Niagara Falls, St. Catharines, St. Thomas and other centers.

When the final returns were in, here is how the parties lined up as compared with their standing in the last legislature:

	New	Old
Farmers	45	2
Liberals	28	30
Conservatives	25	76
Labor	11	0
Independent	2	0
Vacant	—	3
	111	111

Perhaps no one was more surprised at the extent of their success than the Farmers and Labor men themselves. Their most sanguine expectations had led them to wish that it might be possible for them to get something like a balance of power, a condition which would have given them increased influence and not much responsibility. That they themselves should be called upon to form a government and run the affairs of the province had not entered into their minds. With the results as they were, however, there was nothing else

for them to do and in alliance they bravely set at the task. An alliance between the Labor men of the cities and the Farmers is regarded in some quarters as an unnatural one and predictions are freely made that it cannot last. The Labor man's demand for shorter hours, increased wages, and lower prices for foodstuffs is supposed to be diametrically opposed to the interests of the Farmer. Nevertheless these two formed a fairly close working alliance during the campaign, and they are now together assuming the responsibilities of government. They seem to find common interest in the pursuit of the profiteer and big business generally.

FOR the present the Old Party machines are smashed. —it may be for a short time only or it may be forever. What caused the upheaval? That it should have come during an era of high wages and of agricultural prosperity never before surpassed is not one of the least surprising features of the situation, although it is in accordance with economic history that bettered conditions nearly always result in increased agitation. Only slightly is the success of the Farmers and Labor men due to their constructive policies. Possibly not one in five of the electors who voted for their candidate knew what their policies were. Essentially it is a movement of discontent with things as they are: Discontent against profiteering, against monopoly, either in business or in political power, against arrogance and class distinction. There was a great disillusionment during the war, and if Ontario is any criterion, and there is no reason on the surface why it should not be, there will be shocks aplenty for governments all over the world. On the technical side of politics, the war here, as elsewhere, did much to loosen the ordinary party ties so that in this respect also the ground was well prepared for the break-up that has taken place. When the Farmers are criticized on the ground that their movement is a class movement and therefore based on an unstable and dangerous foundation, their reply is that practically all governments in the past have been class governments representing, in spite of a wide franchise, only the moneyed interests and big corporations. And if the Farmers' government is a class government it is at least more broadly based than anything that has preceded it.

The effect on legislative and administrative policy of the new government is sure to be far-reaching. The keynote of the Farmers' provincial policy is economy, and it will not be surprising to see such developments as that Ontario's million dollar Government House, erected for the entertainment of the lieutenant-governor, and said to be much the most elaborate and costly governor's residence on the North American continent, will be dismantled and turned over for some more useful purpose, such as hospital treatment for returned soldiers. If the Farmers are successful in Dominion politics, as they now promise to be, the effect on tariff legislation will be immediate and profound. The Farmers propose free trade with England within five years, progressive reciprocity with the United States, and for immediate free trade in a wide list of articles. The Farmers are also pledged to the abolition of party patronage, to equal educational opportunities for all children, to the principle of proportional representation, and to the practice of direct legislation through initiative and referendum. The Labor party's platform is based on that of the Labor party in Great Britain, and looks forward to such measures as unemployment insurance, motherhood benefits, eight-hour day legislation, and all the allied measures.

In the matter of taxation both parties are agreed on a great increase in the income and succession taxes. In both cases there will be probably a much steeper graduation than anything that has been contemplated in the past.

Races and Equalities

THE statesmen of Japan are quoted again and again as declaring they will insist on "race equality." They complain that in this or that corner of the world Mongolians are treated as inferiors by white people. And the pride of their ancient race rebels against this discrimination.

There is no way of decreeing or dictating an answer to this claim. But there is a sobering lesson for both Mongolians and Caucasians in a simple study of this problem in "race equality." Wherever there is an intense showing of antipathy to Japanese, it is never based on the mere Mongolianism of the Nipponese. In fact we know that the Japanese are not pure Mongolians, that they have a mingling of Aryan blood.

The complaint made against Japanese is that they are not equal to the highest white nations in their ethical standards. In fact, today the bitterest critic of Japan is not a white nation, but the ancient and proud nation of China. And the one people which would be most likely to declare unqualifiedly that the Japanese are inferior to them is this same Chinese people.

Quite often among white travelers returning from abroad, we find an intense dislike for the Japanese, coupled with a warm admiration for the Chinese. And yet, the severest criticism made of Japanese in the present time, is made in the form of a complaint that they are modeling their imperialistic policy after the imperialistic policy of the white men who made up the Prussian militaristic caste.

The Japanese will secure all the "race equality" demanded by their proudest chiefs, as soon as the white nations feel that these brilliant folk have adopted the real standards of civilization. There is no equality save moral equality. The equality which the statesmen desire can be attained, but not by diplomacy. The equality which civilized white nations have is theirs indeed, but it can be lost by any nation which sinks to lower standards.

Four of Our Failures

THEY were very bad boys, the police say, who took part in a big gang fight in Chicago a few Sundays ago. In the midst of the row deadly weapons were used, and one boy of 11 dropped dead from a revolver shot. Three boys of 15 and one of 17 were formally charged with murder by the coroner's jury.

Very bad boys they were. And perhaps the child that is dead should have been somewhere else, not in this fight. Still, they were all boys. And as boys, they were all the wards of the adults of Chicago. All the men and women of Chicago, especially all the voters who boast of their franchise, and all the taxpayers who complain of their taxes, are responsible for the welfare of the children. And in these four lads, charged with murder when they are scarcely old enough to be responsible for truancy, the men and women of Chicago have failed.

Some adult is responsible for the evil nurture of each of those rough lads. Perhaps behind one there is a drunken father or a neglectful mother who made the home an unhappy place. Perhaps there is some other adult whose example was constantly bad. Some adult is responsible for the revolver that was fired. For everything that took place some adults are specially responsible, and all the adults in Chicago are generally responsible.

It is terrible that such things occur in our great cities. But it is less terrible if we learn from them what we should, so that similar things occur less often. It is less terrible if it makes us in all cities more generous with our appropriations for schools and playgrounds, more stringent in our restrictions on firearms, more severe against congestion of population. It is too late to give the dead child back alive to his mother, or to remove horror and stain from those juvenile hands. But it is not too late to save little lives still spared, and preserve reckless young spirits which are still innocent of grave wrongdoing.